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THE MUSIC AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS OF THE KORANA.*

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114 Although a certain amount of information is available regarding the musical practices of the Nama Hottentots, little firsthand knowledge concerning those of the Korana has hitherto been collected, and that little is for the most part scattered throughout the writings of a few travellers and missionaries. I therefore welcomed the opportunity of accompanying my colleague Professor L. F. Maingard to the Bloemhof area, where he had found quite a considerable number of Korana, many of them of great age, but still retaining considerable mental and physical powers.

The results of my investigation have been grouped under the headings, Musical Instruments, Vocal Music, and Musical Terms.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

126 534 Owing to the fact that these few old survivors of the Korana race are no longer living under their original tribal conditions, and also because the younger generation has been subjected to European influences, the musical instruments of ancient days are, almost without exception, no longer played. But the old people still retain their knowledge of them, and were not only ready and willing to impart information about them but did their very best to construct actual specimens, to perform upon them, and to instruct me in methods of performance. In this way seven distinct instruments, together with the manner of making and playing upon them, were identified; and they include examples of Percussion, Wind, and Stringed instruments, and also the "Bull-roarer." The information gathered was as follows.

1. *Percussion Instruments*

534 A drum, named */khais*, was made and played by the Korana women. They took the wooden jar or pot, called *//hoes*, made from the willow tree,

*This study deals with a portion of "A Survey of the Music and Musical Practices of the Native Peoples of Southern Africa," now being conducted by the writer under the auspices and with the support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Research Grant Board of the Union of South Africa.

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534 which was used to contain milk. This jar is, of course, the well-known *bambus* of the early writers. A goatskin was procured, and all the hair was removed. While wet and soft, this skin was stretched over the mouth of the *//hoes*, secured in position by a piece of *riem*, and allowed to dry. The performer seated herself upon the ground, placed the */khais* on the earth before her, and struck it with the flat palm of her right hand. It was used as a rhythmic accompaniment to the songs which were sung during certain dances. I was unable to ascertain whether any attempt was made to tune the instrument to a particular note, as has been suggested by Burchell in the case of the " water-drum " which he saw played by Bushmen ; but it is quite conceivable that such tuning may have been practised by the Korana, when one considers their use of stringed instruments. The usual method of adjusting the pitch of drums employed by Natives of South Africa is to wet the drum skin and then place the instrument in the sun or before a fire until the tension appears to the player to be satisfactory.

There can be no doubt that the */khais* of the Korana is the drum for long associated with the Hottentots, being depicted and described again and again by travellers, and wrongly named by the Dutch Colonists *rommelpot*. It would appear that the early Hollanders, seeing the Hottentots with a drum made from a pot covered with skin, rechristened the instrument with the name given by people of their own nation to a kind of drum made from similar materials by the children in the south of Holland, and used by them at Christmas time. A full account of this instrument, together with the melody and words of the song which was sung to its accompaniment, will be found in the third and fourth volumes of the catalogue of the Instrumental Museum of the Brussels Conservatoire. But the true *rommelpot* was a *friction* drum, the sound being produced by rubbing the moistened fingers up and down a reed one end of which was secured to the centre of the drum skin. This method of sound production on a drum was, so far as I have been able to discover, unknown to the Korana, as also was the name *rommelpot*.

534 Arbousset's description of this drum of the Korana women is worth
535 recalling here (I quote from the English translation by John Crombie Brown, London, 1852, page 54) " Consuming a great part of the day in smoking, and leaving their children covered with vermin, and their houses in a state of the most disgusting filth, like the men they reserve all their activity and vigour for the *sukeis* or *pot-dance*. When the moon enters her first quarter, all the kraal assemble on some favourite elevation; then they dance to the sound of the tang-tang, all the night long, and sometimes for eight nights in succession. In this amusement the

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Korannas place no control on their passions, and abandon themselves to excesses of which it would be a shame even to speak." The so-called "tang-tang" in this description is explained in another passage by Arbousset, in which he describes a similar dance by the Baroa (Hottentots) of Mokoma (Arbousset; English translation p. 353). "Supper being over, the women with their children and the young men set themselves to dance during the first watches of the night, to the sound of a wretched tam-tam" (the French term for a gong, but occasionally applied to drums by some writers, e.g. *Catalogue du Musée Instr., Bruxelles, vol.* 4, *p.* 3) "made of a small earthen pot, in the form of a quoit, and covered with the skin of a gazelle, well softened after having been stript of its hair." 534 535

2. *Wind Instruments*

(a) Signal whistle named *//arey !as*. This instrument consisted of the shin-bone of a springbok, or the leg bone of an ostrich, one end of which was sheared off at right angles to its length, and the marrow removed. A piece of *riem* was attached to it so that it could be suspended from the shoulder of the player. It was sounded by being held against the tongue of the performer in the same way as the *≠a:di* (to be described next) were held, and it yielded a shrill penetrating note of considerable carrying power. It was used by the chief for summoning together the men of his tribe, and it was worn and blown by his headmen. 534

A similar whistle is described by Kolbe as being used in battle by the Hottentots, who employed it to direct operations in the field. One of his plates actually shows the whistle-signallers of two opposing armies each seated upon an eminence, apparently controlling the respective forces. My Korana informants, however, knew nothing of this practice, and, had it been in use among them, it is certain that the older men would have known it in view of the fact that some of the Links people (including Tabab, one of my informants) were actually engaged in battle at Mamusa so recently as 1885. 534 726 202 [115]

(b) Reed-flute ensemble, called *≠a:di*.

This was formerly by far the most important musical feature of the Korana, since it was not only an organised ensemble of many performers, but was really part of the social life of the people. Although it has in the past been frequently noted among the Nama and also the Bechuana, there are but few references in the works of travellers and others to its existence among the Korana. These are Wikar, 1778-9, Wuras, 1858, Stow, 1880, Engelbrecht, 1928, and Meinhof, 1930. But while the 534

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534 descriptions in Wikar and Wuras give a fair account of the nature of the ensemble, Stow's description is entirely erroneous. This is the more to be regretted since Stow's famous work *The Native Races of South Africa* is much more accessible and widely read than the writings of the other travellers.

533 535 Hendrik Jakob Wikar, in his Report to Baron J. von Plettenberg on his journey to the Orange River, 1778-9, described the Korana reed-dance as follows. "They now entertained us with dances and flutes, and on my second trip I understood that they had talked to the other people about their advantage in having seen me; they also had then made for the flute dance a song about me, the rhinoceros dance which I have already described among the Gesicquas, and which I had found to be not unpleasant to see, by the side of the flute dance. To this last sometimes also belongs the mourning song of a woman, whose husband has been slain in war. The song has the following content. She sees herself as a widow with her children, bereft of the care of her husband and their father, and herself pledged to hunt the game which her husband formerly provided. She hopes that she may live long, so that her son will be old enough to fill his father's place and hunt the game for her. For that dance each of the men is provided with a flute, and they form themselves into a circle. Some have large flutes, others small; one man stands with his flute in the middle of the circle. He first begins the dance, and the song, with words; whereupon those standing in the circle begin likewise to dance round and round and at the same time to blow upon their flutes. The tone of the large flute is never introduced into the song unless it fits in with it. The large flute is especially heard when the song is finished; so they dance very curiously, stamping their feet in time. The women dance round the circle one after another, clapping their hands, and here also happens something which reminds one of caresses, for, as they dance round and round, one or two men slink out of the circle. Thereupon they clasp each other tightly; he who has come out of the circle dances beside a woman, and draws gently upon the strings of her fore-kaross, upon which she seems" (feigns) "to threaten him."

534 411 According to Wikar, the reed-flutes were made from river-reed, from which arrows were also made. "Their arrows," he said, with which they shoot wild animals are generally iron "harpoons"; and they also use on the tip of the reed-arrow a sharp-pointed white stone in place of the iron "harpoon," because the stone often breaks into pieces in the body of the wild animal. The other arrows are made of sharp gemsbok 133 bone, etc., which is stuck inside the flute-reed." In his description of the Hartebeeste Rivier, Wikar points out that it is thickly overgrown with

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"Vaderlandze of fluytjesriet." The Hartebeestrivier, is, of course, a tributary of the Orange on the South side, about Long. 20½, Lat. 29¼. 133

Wuras, in his *An Account of the Korana* (MSS. 1858), states on p. 295 (reprinted in *Bantu Studies, Vol. III. p.* 287), "The Aas (the reed play or dance). The day on which the play begins, the men make flutes of reed all of which must have the same tone" (sic). "They then stand in a circle, the music master comes round and listens, if all the flutes are in tune. When he declares them to be in unison," (sic) "the dance commences. The men blowing the flute move in time in a circle; the women form a second circle, and, enclosing the men, dance round them clapping their hands. The dance lasts the whole night. The greatest immorality prevails during these plays, of which there are several. In some of them they imitate the howls and cries of different animals, and at sunrise the men rush to the kraal and catch the sheep and goats for the day's feast, howling like many wolves." 533 535

Engelbrecht and Meinhof practically confine themselves to giving the name and simple definitions of the instrument. Engelbrecht calls the flute *ǂās* and describes it as "a flute made of reed. Of these, different sizes existed, and the tone was also different. The people stood in a circle, and thereupon played and danced." Meinhof calls the reed-flute ≠*'ās* and the reed-dance ≠*'ā-s/aī-b*, and further states, "They" (the Korana) "have no drum," (sic,) "but like the Nama, they have a reed-flute. The women sing and the men play upon the reed-flute." 534

My informants were the oldest men, since the reed-dance has been completely stamped out by the missionaries, some of whom have recorded their pleasure at succeeding in eradicating it. In the Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, Year 1830, p. 44, written from Plaatberg, occurs the following statement regarding the Korana. "During the last year we have got several hymns into use among the people whom we frequently hear singing them in their private houses; and the rapidity with which the songs of Zion supplant the melancholy lora" (printer's error for *gora*, v. infra) "and the whistling reed is truly surprising." This then, was the view of the missionary Archbell, shared, it may be added, by many other missionaries. This particular mission was started in 1827 and ended in 1833. That the "songs of Zion" had no very lasting effect upon the Korana will be seen when their vocal music is discussed. One old man, named Matiti, undertook to make several reed-flutes for me. The proper material was, they said, river reed, but as the only available supplies in the Vaal River were either distant or in deep water, they only procured one stem as a sample. This 533 177 797 534 824 115

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534 824 115 type of reed is thin, being not more than half an inch in diameter (outside measurement) and having a bore of about three-eighths of an inch in diameter. It is regarded as suitable for the manufacture of reed-flutes because of the comparative uniformity of the bore and because the trifling nodal obstructions inside the reed are easily removed, leaving a clear-bore tube. Matiti cut off a length of this reed measuring about 15½ inches, and cleared the bore with a length of wire, since a suitable straight stick was not available. One of the women had in the meantime obtained a handful of ordinary rushes, and she now chewed these, throwing away the pith and leaving the tough fibre, which she straightened out and handed to the old man. Matiti took some of this fibre and rolled it into a ball, which he proceeded to chew. When it was more or less compressed, he took it between his finger and thumb, and pushed it into the wider end of the pipe, forcing it down by means of the wire plunger. I may mention that at first he tried to push it into the narrow end, his sight not being too good, but the others pointed out his error and set him right. He then tried to sound the flute, but since the plug of rush fibre was not air-tight, no clear note could be produced. Upon this, a woman fetched some water, which Matiti poured into the tube, and kept there for some minutes until the plug had swollen, after which he emptied it out and tested the flute as before. This time the tone was clear and ringing. The reed-flute was held in the left hand, the orifice being laid above the hollowed tongue, and not against the lips as is the case with the tube of a panpipe. No " ictus " could be obtained. The fingers steadied the tube against the chin.

534 115

I then endeavoured to have a set constructed, and for this purpose several reeds were obtained from gardens in the neighbourhood of Bloemhof. From these reeds Matiti and another old man, Tebeb, prepared six reed-flutes, but were not very well satisfied with them. They seemed to find difficulty in remembering how they should be tuned, and suggested that their oldest living friend, named Daob, who had his home at some little distance, should be sent for, since he was a musician, and knew all about these things. We were, however, only able to get hold of Daob on the day before our return from Bloemhof, but he proved to be a particularly interesting personality. Daob was completely blind, and consequently our investigation was much hampered. But his vitality and good humour were amazing, and when the set of reeds was put into his hands, he felt them all over, tried to blow one, and finding difficulty, tested all the reeds at both ends by suction, to see whether the plugging was efficient. Apparently he was annoyed, for he burst into Bushman, and then told the ancient Korana that they knew nothing about the reeds,

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but if they got the proper material for him he would show them (he called them " boys ") how flutes should be made. I shall have more to say about old Daob when discussing stringed instruments and vocal music. 534 115

The reeds were kept by one man who acted as the leader in the reed-dance. A case made of a piece of a tree trunk hollowed out by a curved iron tool was used for keeping the reeds in. This hollow wooden case was suspended by a *riem* from the branch of a tree, so that the flutes might be kept in shade. They were not kept inside a hut since the heat of the fire would tend to dry up the plugs and tubes. But whenever the reeds got too dry for use, they would be thoroughly soaked in water. Should a reed split, it could often be made usable, if not too far gone, by being " whipped " with wet rushes, which, when dry, drew the edges of the crack close together. In place of the wooden flute-case a bag of cowskin was often used 534

Women never played the reed-flutes (this directly contradicts Stow); only grown men might perform upon them. Immediately after they had passed through the *doro* or initiation ceremony, the boys would be taught the steps of the reed-dance, and how to play upon the flute. The leader, who was called *!khon!a !hausab*, was the teacher. The men, having been provided with their reed-flutes by their leader, would stand in a circle, and would move round, dancing, counter-clockwise. The men's dance steps involved a leaping movement. The women formed a wider circle outside that of the men, and executed a graceful tripping measure quite different from that of the men, and moved in the opposite direction. Occasionally, however, they would roll their buttocks about in characteristic manner. The flutes were sounded in succession, beginning with the highest in pitch, which was played by the leader. The women clapped their hands in time to the music of the flutes. Owing to the fact that a proper set of flutes was not obtainable, I was unable to arrive at the pitch of the various pipes, but a curious point arises in this connection of which I shall speak when describing the songs of the Korana. 533 562 868 535

The names given to the first four flutes were as follows. 534

(1) *≠ho:≠ho:s*
(2) *!namis*
(3) *geiŋ≠a:s*
(4) *tuxana*

The meaning of the third of these names is " the big reed," which particular flute appears to function as a kind of " tonic," since from it the

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534 others are tuned. I could obtain no names for any other flutes; the Korana said that they merely "followed on."

535 115 In December 1931, Professor Maingard obtained a description of the reed-flute dance, his informant being Saul van Eck, an old Kora who also supplied me with information. The *≠a:di*, he said, were played by men moving in a circle (*ina≠na:e ≠nammi*). In the middle of the circle was a man with a stick who beat the time. The minimum number of reed-flutes was three, which had the same names as the first three on my list above. But there were often as many as twelve, or even fourteen or more players. The whole kraal would join in the dance, even if they were not playing. The women stamped round in an outer circle, clapping their hands (*ina //am*) and shaking their buttocks (*!hare khwedi*). Four o'clock in the afternoon (*haka kororo:p*) was the right time to begin the dance, which lasted until morning (*//kwa:ba*). Oxen were killed for the dancers.

535 621 786 797 After considerable questioning we succeeded in eliciting the information that occasionally there was a kind of "competition" between kraals, in which the reed-dance played a very important part. There can be little doubt that it was this aspect of the dance that roused the missionaries against it, although unquestionably their practice has always been to eradicate all forms of music peculiar to the peoples whom they wish to convert, and in its place to impose that to which they themselves have been accustomed. The inhabitants of one kraal would visit those of another, who met the visitors half-way, the women of each kraal accompanying their men. Oxen would be slaughtered by the hosts for the entertainment of the visitors, and the reed-dance would begin, the women of the one kraal dancing with the men of the other. The dance developed into an orgy, the women abandoning themselves to the men. As my informant put it, "they mixed."

114 533 535 Stow has given us a description of this practice on pages 114-115, but attributes it to the Bushmen, who, so far as I have been able to find out, never originally played reed-flutes; and on page 116 he states that "The Koranas had a dance which was identical with the one described, but as the Bushmen of the north practised it for generations before the Koranas made their appearance on the banks of the 'Nu'Gariep, it is not improbable that the latter derived their knowledge of it from the older race." But it is necessary to quote a passage written by Stow, which should follow the last paragraph on page 115, and which was ill-advisedly deleted by his editor Theal. I reproduce the passage, copied from Stow's original manuscript, with the kind permission of the Trustees of

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the S. A. Public Library, Cape Town, where the manuscript now is. The passage in question was intended as a foot-note and runs: "The women of the Korana tribes had an exactly similar custom of periodically asserting their independence, and visiting the neighbouring kraals in a body, carrying their flutes with them—all the milk of the neighbourhood having been collected at the kraal threatened, when the same scenes of feasting and midnight revels were carried out." I am forced to conclude that Stow was either misinformed or misunderstood his informants when he made the statement that the women were the players. I have searched the records exhaustively in preparing a complete study of all these reed-flute ensembles which I hope to publish shortly, and in no case save that of Stow is there any suggestion that women played the flutes.

These reed-flute ensembles, in which one man contributes one note only, are of particular interest; it would appear that they represent a stage anterior to that of the classical pan-pipe or syrinx. For even though the maker of a set of these reeds may sound several himself by way of testing them, they are never normally so used in actual performance by these people. I have come across only one instance of the practice, and it has avowedly arisen through relatively recent European contacts. As it does not concern the Korana I shall not discuss it here.

3. *Stringed Instruments*

(a) The ordinary hunting bow of the Korana was called *kha:s*, and from it three distinct types of stringed instruments appear to have been evolved The first of these is precisely the same in design and materials as its prototype, save that it is much slenderer and is made specially for musical purposes. This instrument is called *!gabus*, and it consists of a slender stock of seasoned *besjebos*, about thirty inches in length, with the bark removed, and thoroughly smoothed where branches have been cut off. Should the wood be too pliable, it may be dried near a fire until sufficiently rigid, but the Korana preferred to let it dry naturally. A groove is cut at one end of the stick and a string of sinew from the back of an ox fixed in this groove by means of a slip knot. The string is then stretched along the stick and secured at the end by being looped round, that part of the string which passes below the sounding portion acting as a kind of "bridge." The tension is adjusted until a convenient pitch is obtained, the pitch being chosen in such a way that certain harmonics of the string may be readily resonated by the mouth. The end of the instrument at which the string is knotted is placed with its tip against the right hand corner of the mouth, the lips holding it securely, although the mouth behind it is open. The stick must not touch the teeth. The

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533 left hand supports the stick by grasping it at a convenient point, but no pressure must be brought to bear upon it, since the tightening or slackening of the bow would cause the pitch of the string to vary, and this is not desired by the Korana. With the right forefinger the player plucks the string, the principal sounds being executed with a downward action, and the subsidiary ones with an upward action. I have indicated these in the examples quoted by means of the signs used by violinists for downward and upward bowing, ⊓ and V respectively. The string, of course, produces but one sound when plucked, although implicit in it are the overtones known as the " harmonic series." These the Hottentot has recognised, and has discovered or learned that some of them may be isolated and reinforced by the variable cavity of the mouth. The following examples will show the nature of the performance : they were played by Tabab, who is seen performing on the instrument in Plate VII. It will be understood that the prime tone of the string is present throughout, although it is not the main sound ; it serves as a kind of drone to the bugle-like tune played on the harmonics. This instrument is best sounded in quiet places, when its sweet tones can be clearly heard.

Ex. 1. ♩=120.

534 (b) A second development from the hunting-bow is played exclusively by the women. It retains the original name of *kha:s*. Like the *!gabus* it is made from a branch of *besjesbos*, about three-quarters of an inch to one inch thick and about thirty-eight inches long. The bark should be removed, and the wood allowed to season, although in the example made for me the bark was left on and the wood dried by fire. A stout string of twisted sinew is prepared, and is secured by a slipknot in a groove made at one end of the stock. This end is then placed on the ground and the stick forced into a semicircular form, when the other end of the string is secured to the tip of the stick just as in the case of the *!gabus*. A thin piece of seasoned wood or reed about fourteen inches long and an eighth of an inch in diameter serves as a beater, for this 533 instrument is normally sounded by striking. The player, having tuned the instrument (to suit her voice), seats herself upon the ground, and takes the bow in her hands. The lower end, where the string is knotted, [115] she places upon a bag of skin (*//ho:b*) or a dish of willow wood, which acts as a resonator. (Gotis, who played for me, and who appears on Plate VI, used a one-gallon paraffin tin as a substitute) and is placed to her right.

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VI, used a one-gallon paraffin tin as a substitute) and is placed to her right. The right foot holds this end of the bow in position, while the upper end rests against the left shoulder. Taking the beater between the first finger and thumb of her right hand, she strikes the string with a clean *staccato* action, comparable to that used in side-drum playing, and a ringing tone is produced. This is the fundamental tone of the string. By lightly touching the middle point of the string with the second phalange of the forefinger of her left hand, and at the same time striking the string, the first harmonic, one octave above the fundamental, is produced. Again, by pressing upon the string with the chin at the appropriate spot, a second fundamental, a tone higher than the original one, is obtained, and by touching the string at the new middle point, the octave of this second fundamental is heard. These are the principal sounds elicited from this instrument by the Korana women, although I observed, in one instance, a woman touching the string at the " node " required to produce the second harmonic of the string. But this may have been accidental, although the Bechuana women, who also play this type of instrument, actually use it and also a higher partial. Example 2 shows the typical use of the instrument. The symbols above the stave show the chin technique, ○ meaning that the chin is clear of the string, and × that it is pressed on to the string ; the symbols below the stave show the fingering, ○ meaning that the fundamental is being sounded, and ● the first harmonic.

533

Ex. 2. ♩=108.

Such a musical pattern as this serves as an *ostinato* accompaniment for a song, the melody of which is to a certain extent controlled by the instrument. The vocal music sung to the accompaniment of the *kha:s* differs considerably from the simpler strophic lyrics that are characteristic of these people, and of which I quote six examples below. In the *kha:s* songs the voice is both rhythmically and melodically very free, being much nearer to speech than in the more formal tunes. In point of fact, the specimens which I heard sung by Gotis were almost more speech than song ; and I am inclined to suggest that the actual speech-tones of the language directed the course of the melody. Phonograms of Korana speech (not song) which I made of Tabab were musically so clear-cut

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533 that it was possible to transcribe them into musical notation without much difficulty. The voice parts of two songs performed with *kha:ɔ* 533 accompaniment were recorded at Pneil by Meinhof in February 1928, and 114 transcribed by Heinitz in his *Struktur-Probleme in Primitiver Musik* in 1931. The sound of the *kha:ɔ*, however, could not be recorded, nor were the transcribed sounds associated with their corresponding syllables.

Further, Heinitz' description of the *kha:ɔ* itself, based upon that of Meinhof, is wrong in several respects; for he suggests that the string is "stopped" by the finger, says that it is made to vibrate by means of a 533 plectrum, and fails to note the distinctive use of the chin. Gotis showed me a method of playing this instrument *pizzicato*. She plucked the string with one hand, using the other for touching it at the "nodes." A further variant was demonstrated when she played as just described, while another woman struck the lower end of the string with the beater. They called this style "playing like baboons." Some interesting rhythmic variation was thus obtained, although the compass of the instrument was not affected thereby. The woman with the beater maintained a steady rhythm, while she who plucked the string was responsible for the variation. After playing, the Korana women slacken the string of the *kha:ɔ*.

533 In my paper of July 1931, entitled "The Mystery of the Grand 114 Gom-gom," published in Vol. XXVIII of the *South African Journal of Science*, I endeavoured to show how it must have been this instrument, or some similar one, which Le Vaillant saw in the hands of a Hottentot woman, and mistook for the *gora*, being in all likelihood misled by the chin action. At the time of writing that paper, I was not aware that the instrument was definitely a Hottentot one; but it seems to me that its presence among the Korana endorses my argument, even though the actual Hottentots described by Le Vaillant were not of that particular tribe.

534 (c) The third stringed instrument of the Korana is, perhaps, most characteristic of them. This is the famous *gora*, or *goras*, for I have heard them use both forms of the name. The *goras*, as is well-known, consists of a fairly straight stick with the bark removed, and seasoned suitably. A string of sinew is fixed to a spatulate piece of quill taken from the feather of a *korhaan*. The string is passed through a hole in the tip of the quill and spliced into itself, never knotted. The quill itself is lashed to one end of the stick by a piece of sinew or *riem*, and at the other end whipped to the stick like the string of the *!gabus*. By applying 533 the quill to the mouth, and inspiring and expiring vigorously, certain

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harmonics of the string are powerfully produced. As I have gone very fully into the history of and methods of construction and performance upon this instrument in my paper "*The Gora and its Bantu Successors*," published in *Bantu Studies* Vol. V, no. 2, June 1931, it is unnecessary to say more about it here, except to emphasise that it appears to have belonged particularly to the Korana. But I would add the information obtained in December, 1931, by Professor Maingard, when Mulukab, a Korana, who was in the Orange Free State, visited his friends at Bloemhof. When the name of the instrument was mentioned, all the Korana remembered it, but said that it was no longer played by them. Mulukab, however, became wildly excited, jumped up, and applying his traveller's stick to his mouth, hummed a tune and sketched a few dance steps. Mulukab is recognised as an expert on the instrument and can still play it. He added "You play it by yourself. It makes you forgetful of things, and you can be your own company." Plate VI shows Seleki, a Kora who lives in the location at Schweizer Reneke, photographed at that place playing upon the instrument.

533 [114] [115]

The *ramki*, the guitar-like stringed instrument universally attributed to the Hottentots, is unknown to these Korana, and the principles involved in its construction are entirely foreign to their musical practice.

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(d) Miscellaneous Instruments.

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The only Korana instrument known to me which comes into this category is a form of bull-roarer, called *buru-buf*. It is made for and played only by young boys, and has lost any significance it may have had. It is interesting, however, in view of Balfour's suggestion that the bull-roarer may have had something to do with the origins of the gora. (Balfour: "*The Goura*," p. 173). Among the Korana it is made of a flat oblong strip of wood about five and a half inches long, two inches wide and a quarter of an inch thick. The wood is thinned down somewhat towards the tip (the corners of which are slightly rounded), and also along the edges. A hole is bored at the thick end, a string threaded through it, and the ends of the string knotted together. The boy takes the loop of string in his right hand and whirls the bull-roarer round and round in the usual manner. Plate VII shows a Kora boy holding the instrument.

VOCAL MUSIC

533 126 115

A number of songs performed chiefly by old Daob, the blind musician, were recorded on the phonograph, and afterwards transcribed by me. The texts were secured by Professor Maingard who has kindly

13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
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533 edited them for me. I am responsible for the adjustment of the Korana
126 texts to the melodies. It is interesting to point out that old Daob at first
115 was unwilling to sing because he had no other singers to sing with him. His voice was high in pitch, and in spite of his great age (he was well over a hundred) his intonation was excellent and clear-cut.

533 Ex. 3. *Mittlab /noãı kjeıa*
539

♩=132.
Mitt-lab /nõaı kje-ıa Mitt-lab /nõaı kje-ıa Mitt-lab /nõaı kje-ıa
Mitt-lab /nõaı kje-ıa ou Daob /nõaı kje-ıa ou Daob /nõaı kje-ıa
Daob /hou kx²ãiŋ!na ou Daob /nõaı kje-ıa ou Daob /nõaı kje-ıa
ou Daob /nõaı kje-ıa Mitt-lab /nõaı kje-ıa ou Daob /nõaı kje-ıa
Daob /hou kx²ãiŋ!na ou Daob /nõaı kje-ıa

This song is descriptive of a quarrel between Daob and another man named Mittlab over the ownership of a cow. Translated, the words mean

Mittlab ! It is his cow !
Mittlab ! It is his cow !
Old Daob ! It is his cow !
Daob ! You have a beard all over your face !

13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
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The rivals have each claimed the animal, but Daob, the more astute of the two, has gone off with it, whereupon Mittlab calls him an old baboon. The song is in dialogue form, and it is interesting to note how one form of the melodic phrase is used almost always to indicate Mittlab, and a different one for Daob. The formation of the melody upon the two triads, which was unmistakeable, is also significant.

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Ex. 4. *da hata kje !kuti*

This is the beginning of a song called */gamsta* (a man's name). Translated, the words mean,

Where shall we find Kuti? (brother of */gamsta*)
Why don't you smack the boy yourself?
The old people have got hold of him.
Why has the boy got the better of you?

13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Korana

533 Ex. 5. *tĭ ti-mĭ tĭ*
539

♩=100
tĭ ti-mĭ tĭ.... tĭ tĭ-mĭ-mĭ tĭ ti-mĭ tĭ....
tĭ to-mĭ tĭ to-mo tĭ.... tĭ tĭ-mĭ-mĭ tĭ ti-mĭ tĭ....
tĭ to-mĭ tĭ to-mo tĭ.... tĭ to-mĭ tĭ.... tĭ....
tĭ to-mĭ tĭ.... tĭ.... tĭ ti-mĭ tĭ ti-mĭ tĭ....
tĭ ti-mĭ tĭ to-mo tĭ....

The syllables of this song are meaningless; they are merely syllables comparable to the tra-la-la of English song. The position of this and the following three songs is curious. Old Daob was asked to sing the sounds of the reed-flutes. This must have been, to him, an unusual request. However, when he realised that we wished to hear the sound of the first flute, *gĭdo:gĭdo:*, he began to sing this melody, which I made him repeat, and which I recorded. The notation represents adequately what Daob sang; the curious hurrying in the fourth, seventh, tenth and eleventh bars is characteristic. The bar-lines have been introduced to indicate the phrasing.

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Ex. 6. */ui mare /harab/na too*

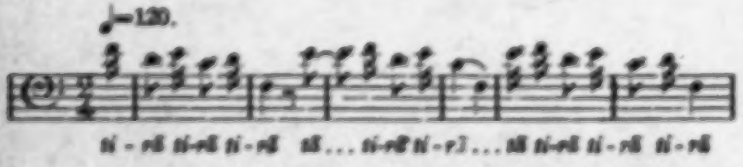
♩=86.
/ui mare /harab /na too /ui mare /harab /na too /ui mare /harab /na too
o de-na /hũ... ŋ!hoie thõ thõ /now
/ui mare /harab /na too /ui mare /harab /na too /ui mare /harab /na too
de-na /hũ... ŋ!hoie thõ thõ /now

This song was sung by Daob when asked for the sound of the second flute, */nannie*. Translated, the words mean

> When the cows are in the kraal in the evening,
> They come inside *
> (*The meaning of the remainder of the words is not clear)

This, said Daob, was the beginning of a war-song. I am not absolutely certain that the words should be fitted to the melody exactly as shown. Daob's singing in this instance was rather faint, and the phonogram suffered accordingly.

Ex. 7. *tirũ tirũ tirũ*



13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
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Korana

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This song was sung by Daob when asked for the sound of the third flute, *geiŋ‡a:x*. The syllables mean nothing.

Ex. 8. *Tuxana /uib tse !nora sintskoko*

♩=160
Tu-xa-na /uib tse !no - ra sints-ko - ko Ai - o, ai - o, !no -
ra sin-tsko-ko Tu-xa-na /uib tse !no - ra sin-tsko - ko Ai -
o, ai - o, !no - ra sin-tsko-ko Ai - o Ai -
o, !no - ra sin-tsko-ko Ai - o Ai-o, ai-o, !no -
ra sin-tsko-ko Tu-xa-na /uib tse !no - ra sintsko - ko Ai -
accel.
-o Ai - o Ai - o Ai - o, Ai - o

13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
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Korana

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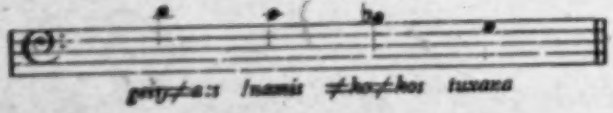
This song was sung by Daob when asked for the sound of the fourth pipe *tuxana*. Translated, the words mean

> Tuxana, have you rolled down the stone?
> Have you rolled down the stone?
> Ai-o, Ai-o!

I was unable to discover from the Korana the actual connection between these songs and the flutes, particularly as I could not obtain the tuning of the flutes themselves. This I hope to do later, and meantime would suggest that there is a possibility that these tunes served as a series of mnemonics whereby the skilled musicians of the Korana people might tune their reed-flutes; for the nature of the Korana instruments is such that no permanent pitch standards could be maintained, unless their whole musical system were based upon the harmonic series, apparent to them in all their stringed instruments. 533

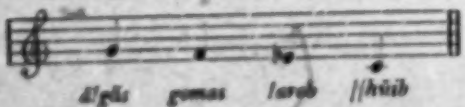
But an examination of the four tunes associated by Daob with the reed-flutes yields the following significant information. In Tune III, *tĭ ti-nĕ tĭ*, the note which is heard most frequently is B flat, and it is also consistently emphasised; in Tune IV, */ui mare !harab !na tao*, the note C is similarly prominent; while in Tune V, *ti-ra ti-ra ti-ra*, the outstanding note is D. Again, in Tune VI, *Tuxana, /uib tse !nora sintskoko*, the note most frequently sounded is G. Assuming that these notes represent the sounds of the four principal reed-flutes, we arrive at the following fragmentary scale.

Ex. 9.



of which the first note *geiy≠a:ɔ* is sounded by the flute of the leading musician. A comparison of this scale with the Nama reed-flute scale quoted by Schultze (*Aus Namaland und Kalahari*, p. 375 e. seq.) shows that a similar sequence of notes is present, although it does not begin with the principal reed-flute, *aĭdi*, but with the next lowest flute,

Ex. 10.



13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
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533 But an exactly similar scale occurs in a set of four reed-flutes which I possess, and which were made and played by the */awa gowab sān* or Red-Dunes Bushmen who live near the western fringe of the Kalahari desert, and who have doubtless been in close contact with the Nama Hottentots. The scale of this set of reed-flutes is

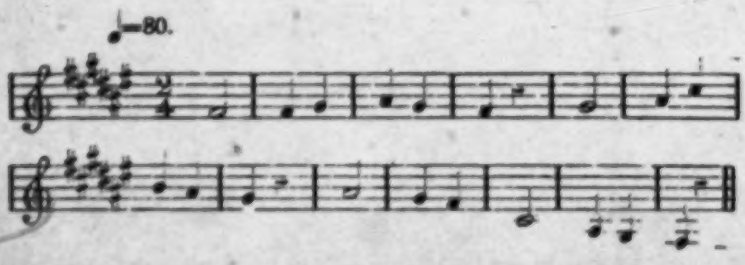
Ex. 11.

aidi ā!gāi ||hui gomai

As regards the method of singing displayed by Daob, one was at once struck by the crispness of his rhythm. Slurring, when used, was deliberate, and in this connection it is worth drawing attention to the fact that, in several of the songs, there are two sounds sung to one syllable. Otherwise there is a considerable agreement in general outline between the words as sung, and the same words as spoken; and this agreement applies also to the relative emphasis of the various syllables. In fact, so "musical" was the speech of certain of the Korana, and so definite the relative pitches of the speech tones, that frequently speech constituted melody, in which one seemed to hear at least six distinct pitches. Nevertheless I am not at this stage prepared to dogmatise on the point since I have not so far been able to obtain sufficient material upon which to generalise.

533 177 539 [115] In addition to the songs performed by old Daob, four Korana women sang a couple of songs. The first of these, reputed to be a lullaby, was sung by Gotis and Keis. European influence is apparent in this song.

Ex. 12. *hada ||nāu*



13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
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The words of this song, which was sung with the drawl that appears to be inevitable when the Bantu, unguided by Europeans, attempt to sing European melody, were

hada //nĩu he: buruxa mis,

which means

Let us listen to this wonderful little word.

The second song affords an even better example of the use to which the backsliding convert may put the "songs of Zion;" for here, what is palpably a hymn tune, or rather the two upper parts of one, is turned into a lullaby, with secular words. In this case also, the laziness of the rendering was characteristic, and quite opposed to the crisp execution employed by Daob, in spite of his years. The singers were two younger women, Iis and Kwakwaris. [115]

Ex. 13. *mati, mati*

13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
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The words, translated, mean

Give me, give me!
We have taken the honey out.
This is my soul. Amen.

This particular song affords an excellent illustration of the distortion of Native words when forced into the Procrustes bed of European hymnology.

MUSICAL TERMS

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In addition to the names given to their musical instruments there are a few musical terms used by the Korana, in spite of the relatively restricted vocabulary of the language. High sounds are called */kurise ≠nae* and low sounds */eri doma ≠nae*. A single singer, man or woman, performing alone is */guse ≠nae*, and a chorus of men and women is called */kɔ: ≠nae kx^{g}ona*. This latter name would be given to the singers in the *doro* ceremony. The sound of two voices singing the same sound simultaneously is called */kam domkwa*; but the sound of two voices singing different notes simultaneously is called */anŋ≠nae*. These last terms indicate clearly the practical recognition of harmony among the Korana.

13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
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Korana

[End] PLATE I.

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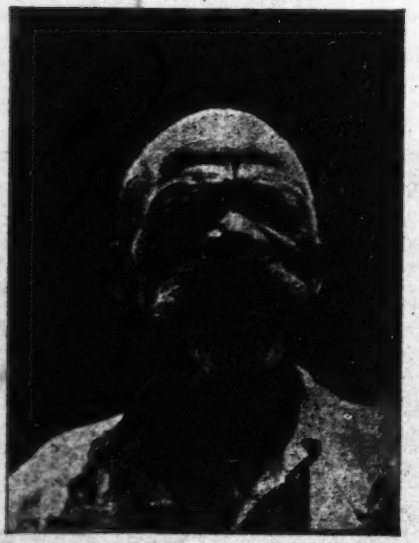
Xras (Schweizer Reneke.)



Sele:ki (Schweizer Reneke).

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[End] PLATE II.

115
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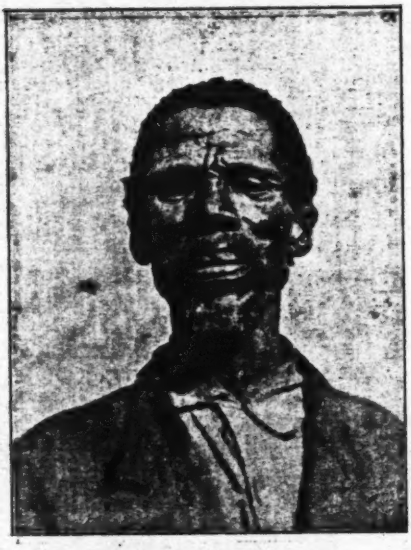

Tabab (Bloemhof).

Kheis (Bloemhof).

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Korana

[End] PLATE III.

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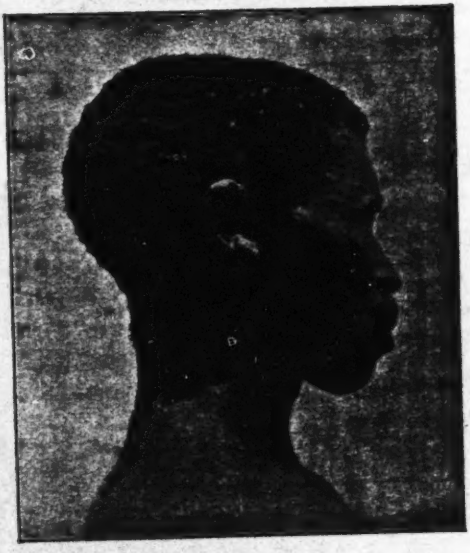

A. and B.
Abraham Links.

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Korana

[End] PLATE IV.

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Site of Saron Mission Station.

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The Grave of Johannes Links.

13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Korana

[End] PLATE V.

Matiti plugging a Flute

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Matiti blowing a Flute.

Method of blowing the *Reed-Flute.*

13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
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Korana

[End] PLATE VI.

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Gotis playing the *Kha:s*.

Sele:hi playing the *Goras*.

13: Kirby R-5 (1931-1932) 1932
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Korana

[End] PLATE VII.

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Tabab playing the *!Gabus*.

Korana boy with a Bull-Roarer.